

Gen. Lyles:

Scientists, engineers vital to mission

BY STAFF SGT. A.J. BOSKER
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WASHINGTON—The Air Force is having difficulty recruiting and retaining its civilian and military scientist and engineering workforce, Gen. Lester L. Lyles, Air Force Materiel Command commander, told senators March 31.

If the service wants to retain its position as the world’s premier air and space force, it must recruit and retain these scientists and engineers, and provide them with the career guidance and mentorship that will enable the Air Force to meet its 21st century challenges, Lyles said during a Senate Armed Services Committee subcommittee on emerging threats and capabilities hearing.

Over the next seven years, the Air Force will invest nearly a third of a billion dollars to support the retention and reshaping of its technological workforce, he said in a written statement.

This investment will fund several initiatives that address both civilian and military recruitment and retention issues.

The Air Force Research Laboratory, which falls under Lyles’ command, was the first to take advantage of legislation allowing the Air Force to experiment with alternative personnel management systems for civilian scientists and engineers.

“The result was a simplified classification system, broadband pay levels and contribution-based compensation that gave us the flexibility needed to compete with private industry for critical science and engineering talent and properly compensate our high contributors,” the general said.

According to Lyles, the Air Force has also had great difficulty recruiting minority scientists and engineers. To combat this, AFMC implemented a command-wide recruitment program targeting these highly sought-after candidates.

Air Force science and technology rep-

resentatives attend national career fairs and conferences to promote Air Force opportunities and collect resumes. The collected resumes are given to the appropriate civilian personnel offices and provide a ready-made source of high-quality applicants, he said.

“This targeted recruitment, in conjunction with hiring flexibilities of the Federal Career Intern Program, is enabling the Air Force to make more timely offers to highly sought-after graduates,” Lyles explained.

Other civilian initiatives also under way include the recruitment of college students with critical science and engineering skills by recruiting incentives, robust marketing efforts, and a co-op central funding program that hires college students while they are still in school, he said.

Continued support for central funding of recruitment bonus and retention allowances for journeyman-level scientists and engineers also promises to help civilian recruitment and retention, Lyles said.

On the military side, the Air Force is using the Airman Education and Commissioning Program and the Technical Degree Sponsorship Program to recruit additional scientists and engineers into the military workforce.

In addition, the Air Force is examining several possible bonus programs to add to current initiatives, such as the Critical Skills Retention Bonus, which are essential to Air Force efforts to increase the number of military scientists and engineers, he said.

“We remain committed to the scientist and engineer workforce and are confident that with continued funding support, they will lead the discovery, development and timely transition of affordable and transformational technologies that will keep us the best air and space force in the world,” Lyles said.

Sandia Labs

focusing on technology advances, antiterrorism

Antiterrorism work and technological advances continue to be the focus at Sandia National Laboratories, according to the State of the Labs report.

C. Paul Robinson, Sandia president and labs director said, “We want to continue to create the kind of national security lab that is worthy of the freest nation in the world.”

Some of the research advances to counter terrorism include:

★ SnifferStar chemical sensors that mount on drones to detect both blister and nerve agents

★ Laser-induced fluorescence sensors that can detect and discriminate biological agents used in bio-weapons

★ Sensors deployed in airports and subways on both coasts lead to a new generation of sensors that help protect borders and harbors

★ A synthetic aperture radar that makes it harder for enemies to hide from our military forces

“This is a period of enormous challenge for our country. I for one sleep better at night knowing that we have Sandia and all the capable people of Sandia meeting these challenges,” said Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M.

Sandia has also developed or is working on other projects for the safety and security of the nation:

★ The merging of robotics capabilities with sensor, remote video and bomb-disablement know-how to develop robots than can disarm a bomb

★ The Gunshot Residue Detection Kit that can help police determine, at the crime scenes, if an individual has recently fired a gun

★ Work with outside companies to build the world’s fastest computer, Red Storm, which will be capable of at least 40 trillion operations per second

The labs are also working to replace incandescent and fluorescent lighting with a new light source that nearly mimics natural sunlight and is much more efficient.

Sandia has a budget of \$2 billion this year, the largest budget in lab history, and has hired 1,300 new employees. It expects to continue substantial hiring in the future, said Joan Woodard, Sandia’s executive vice president and deputy director.

OF NOTE

Briefings

★ **Savings briefing**
The Thrift Savings Program, college loans repayment plan, and Savings Deposit Plan are discussed **April 15**, 1:30-3 p.m. at the Family Support Center. Register at 846-0741.

★ **Learn how to apply**
Federal Jobs Application Preparation Workshop is **April 16**, 1:30-4 p.m., at the Family Support Center. Register at 846-0741.

★ **Baby program set**
Bundles for Babies is **April 21**, 8:30-11 a.m. at the Family Support Center. Learn about baby care and financial issues of parenting and receive a free baby gift pack at the program. Register at 846-0741.

Closings

★ **Thrift Shop**
The Kirtland Officers Spouses Club Thrift Shop is closed through **April 18** and reopens **April 21**.

★ **IG office**
The Inspector General Office closes **April 25** and **May 2** during retirement ceremonies for Col. Richard Savage and Lt. Col. James Beach.

★ **Medical group**
The 377th Medical Group is open with very limited services **April 16** and for active duty sick call only, 7-8 a.m. **April 17**, during monthly training. Normal operations resume **April 18**.

★ **Med Group sections**
The Public Health, Force Health Management,

Bioengineering, Optometry and Medical Plans and Operations Flight are closed **today**, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., for an official squadron function.

Education

★ **College test offered**
The Education Center is offering the English CLEP with Essay **June 4**, 8:15 a.m. in the center’s Room 116B. Register in person or call 846-9933 or 846-8955 by **May 2** to schedule testing.

★ **Pro development**
To learn about the Top 3’s Enlisted Professional Development Course, contact Master Sgt. David A. Halvorson at david.halvorson@kirtland.af.mil. The course was developed to fill the gap between Airman Leadership School and NCO Academy. It features a relaxed classroom atmosphere designed to further develop and refine the abilities of staff sergeants with a mix of informal lectures, group participation, panel forums and one-on-one discussions. No tests are given in the course.

★ **Scholarship**
The Zia Chapter of the National Contract Management Association is accepting applications for its 2003 Eloy J. Baca Memorial Scholarship. Application deadline is **May 16**; scholarship awards will be made in September. Complete application packages, including all supporting documentation, should be mailed to: Sandra M. Maes, NCMA Zia Chapter Scholarship Chair, Directorate of Contracting,

Detachment 8 AFRL/PKDP, 2251 Maxwell Avenue SE, Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5773. Call 846-4635.

Events

★ **Military children**
Here are events that celebrate the Month of the Military Child.
Pajama Day at Child Development Centers, **April 22**; Spaghetti dinner with musical entertainment, **April 29**, 4:30 p.m, CDCs; Serving the Best, a parents’ dinner from the cooking class, for members of the Kirtland Boys and Girls Club; youth ice cream social, for club members, **April 22**; spaghetti dinner with musical entertainment, **April 29**, 4:30 p.m., for club members; make your own smoothie and membership night at Boys and Girls Club, **April 30**.
The Family Member Programs sponsors an Easter egg hunt for all TEAM KIRTLANDers at the Boys and Girls Club, **April 19**; parent lunchtime workshop on how children learn, **April 23**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., in Gibson Child Development Center, with reservations due by **April 19** at 846-1103; a book fair at Gibson Child Development Center, **April 29-30**.

★ **ALS graduation**
The Airman Leadership School hosts a graduation ceremony and luncheon for Class 03-E, **May 15**, 11:30 a.m., in the Mountain View Club. Tickets for \$8 a person for club members and \$10 for nonmembers are available through **April 30** from

students or by e-mail at 377MSS.DPN@kirtland.af.mil. For upcoming class information and eligible attendees, check the Airman Leadership School Web site at www.kirtland.af.mil/organizations/ALS/index.

★ **‘Crime dog’ visits**
The 377th Security Forces Squadron Crime Prevention Day features a visit by McGruff the Crime Fighting Dog, **tomorrow**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the BX. Children and adults are invited to the event with child fingerprinting, crime awareness packages, bike identification engraving for children and adults and other activities.

★ **Free skating**
TEAM KIRTLAND members can skate free at the new Roller King skating rink all weekends through April. Show your base identification to be admitted free along with friends and family at the door. Skate rentals are included. Rollerblade rentals are \$2. Session times are Fridays, 6-8 and 8-10 p.m., Saturdays, 1-3 p.m. and 3-5 p.m., and Sundays, 1-3 p.m., 3-5 p.m. and 6-8:30 p.m.

★ **Dining Out slated**
The second annual Space and Missile Systems Center Detachment 12 Dirty Dozen Dining Out is **May 2**, in the Mountain View Club. Guest speaker is Gen. Lance W. Lord, Air Force Space Command commander. For ticket information, call Capt. Jared Burdin, 846-8354.

★ **58th tour set**
The 58th Special Operations Wing’s Newcomers tour is **April 23**. Call Staff Sgt. Laura Holzer at 853-5858.

★ **Awards ceremony**
The Kirtland AFB Quarterly Awards Ceremony and Luncheon is **April 25**, 11:30 a.m., in the Mountain View Club. Menu is chicken salad croissant with sliced fruit. Tickets are \$8 for club members and \$10 for nonmember. Reserve a seat with your first sergeant by **April 21**.

★ **Military banquet**
The Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring its annual Armed Forces Banquet, **May 17**, at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid. Gen. Robert H. Foglesong, Air Force Vice Chief of Staff, is guest speaker. Individual tickets for retired military and chamber members are \$50 a person; for active duty military, Reservists and Guard are \$35, and for nonmembers of the chamber are \$65. Call Celatha Pennington at 764-3743.

★ **Lecture series**
The New Mexico Veterans Memorial hosts free lectures at the Visitors Center, 10:30 a.m., at 1100 Louisiana Boulevard Southeast. “Army Engineers” by Larry Blair is **April 19**, and “Youngest B-17 Crew in World War II” by Paul Wasner is **May 3**.